

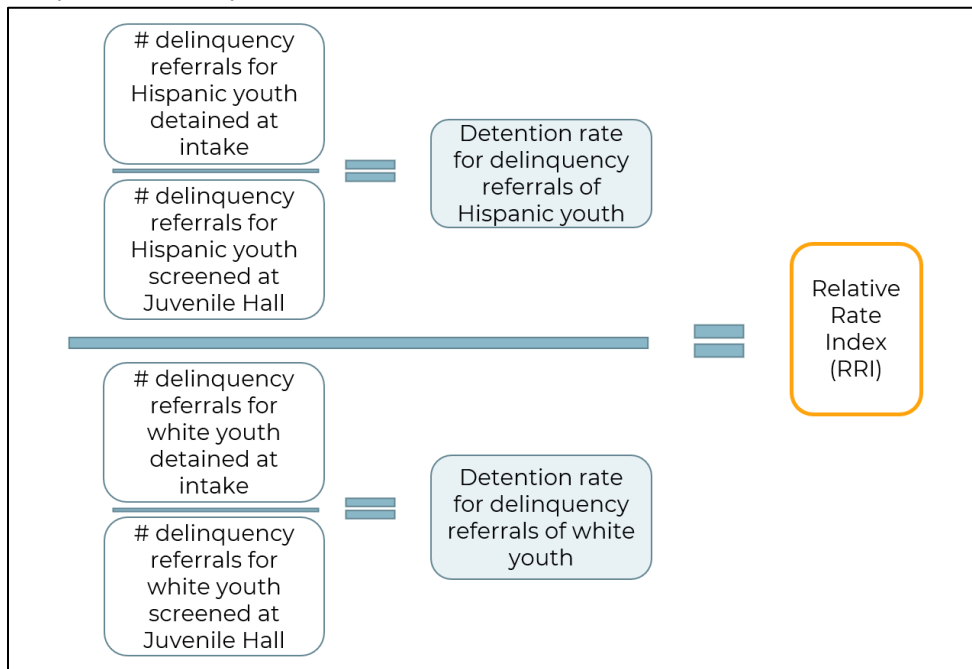
JUVENILE RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES ANALYSIS – JUVENILE HALL CASES

Methodology

To identify over- or under-representation of certain racial/ethnic groups at key decision points in the juvenile justice system – in this case the detention intake decision point – we use a method of calculating decision-specific relative rate indices (RRIs) for new cases where the youth was booked at Juvenile Hall. RRI's are commonly used in juvenile and criminal justice research to provide a more targeted and accurate picture of racial/ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system, by identifying decision points that contribute to the overall disparity in the system.

The RRI compares the rate of occurrence of an event (e.g., a decision to detain) among one group of youth with the rate of another group at the same event. The RRI method for a decision point analysis describes activity from one contact point to the next and how it differs between youth of different racial/ethnic groups, thereby isolating disproportionality at a particular point. The visual below depicts an example of how the RRI is calculated for detention intake decisions, comparing the detention rate between Hispanic and white youth.

Graphic 1. Example of a Relative Rate Index Calculation for New Referrals



Interpreting the RRI

- **An RRI below 1.0** indicates the rate of occurrence is less frequent than the occurrence in the reference group (e.g., white youth), indicating *under*-representation at a given decision point.
- **An RRI greater than 1.0** indicates the rate of occurrence is more frequent than the occurrence in the reference group, indicating *over*-representation at a given decision point.
- **An RRI of 1.0** indicates parity, with no over- or under- representation at a given decision point.

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It should be noted that the RRI is a tool to help justice system stakeholders identify areas or decisions that warrant more intensive examination. The RRI cannot tell us *why* we might see disparities across racial/ethnic lines, but rather highlights areas for further inquiry.

For this part of the analysis, we examined detention decisions made for delinquency referrals where the youth was brought to Juvenile Hall for screening in calendar years 2014-2022. This analysis continues the examination of case decisions and includes detention decisions when a youth is brought to detention on a new case. Each case is counted separately, even when multiple new cases are included in a detention screening. This analysis includes new referrals for any misdemeanor or felony charge. Probation violations are not included. Only cases among youth who were 12 through 17 at the time of referral were considered. Detention intakes on warrants without a new case are not included in this analysis. Calculating rates for detain and release decisions uses a denominator of cases screened at Juvenile Hall, as shown in Graphic 1 above. For example, if 50 out of 100 cases screened at Juvenile Hall result in detention, the detention rate is 50%. The calculation of mandatory detention and assessment score override rates use a denominator of cases where there was a decision to detain. For example, if 20 out of the 50 cases resulting in detention were held based on mandatory detention criteria, the mandatory detention rate is 40%.

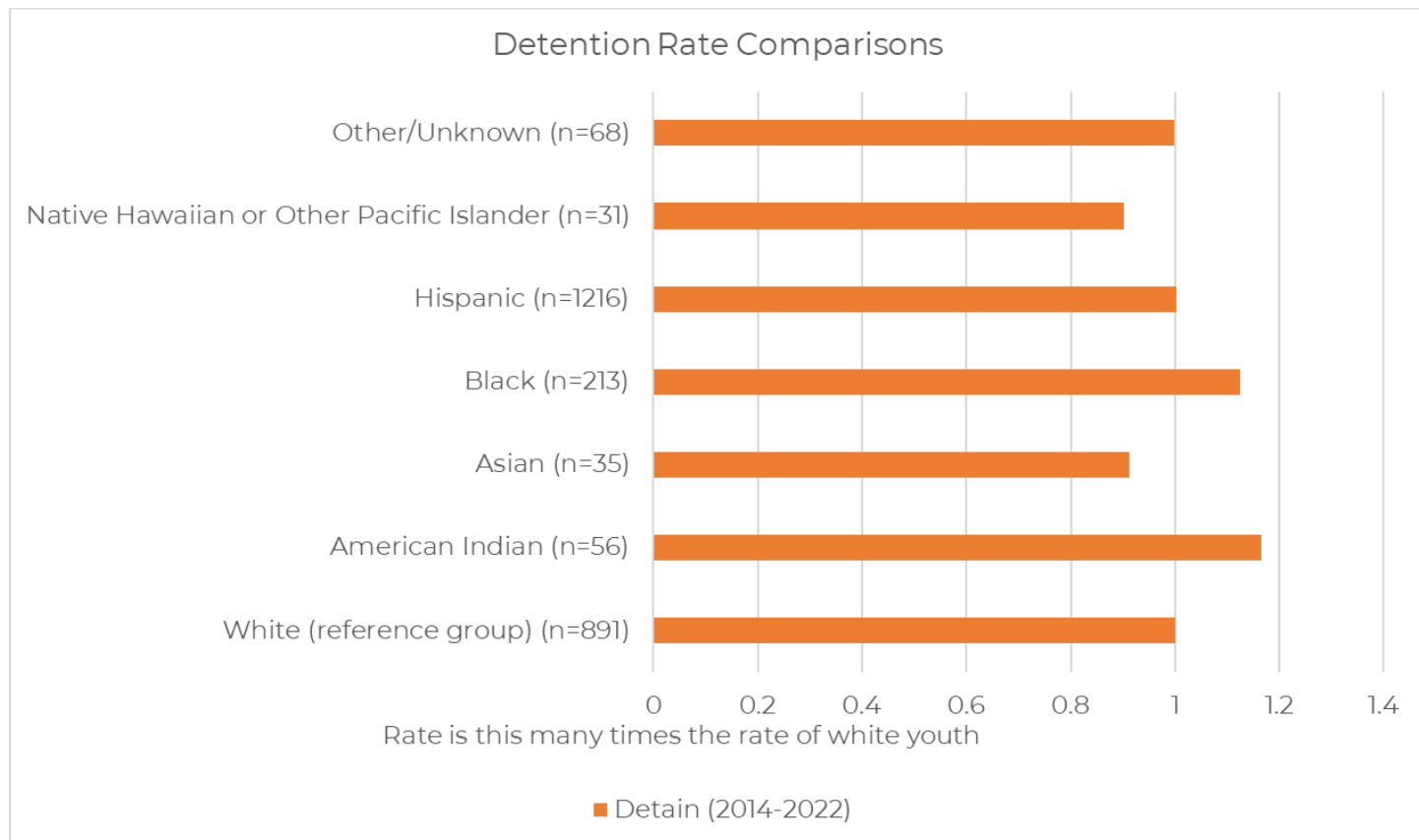
At this stage of the analysis, we are able to compare rates for all racial/ethnic groups recorded in Sonoma County Probation's records system. This differs from the prior stage where we compared race/ethnicity for youth with new delinquency cases to Sonoma County population counts from the US Census and had to omit non-matching groups from the analysis, such as youth with race/ethnicity recorded as multiracial and other/unknown. However, race/ethnicity data in Probation's records system has limitations: race/ethnicity is typically not self-report and may not reflect how a youth self-identifies. Additionally, our data system collapses race and ethnicity into a single field, and only allows one choice, which can have the effect of masking multiple identities and undercounting some groups.

Results

Chart 1 below uses the RRI to compare rates of detention – as opposed to release – for seven racial ethnic groups with white as the reference group. Some groups are small, meaning that small changes in how many youth are detained can have large effects on the detention rates – and therefore also on the RRIs – for these groups. The smaller the group, the less confidence that we would see a similar result if we measured again with a similar group size. Confidence is higher for larger groups. From 2014-2022 multi-racial youth had 9 referrals screened at Juvenile Hall with 7 leading to detention. These numbers are so small that the group's RRI (which incidentally is like that of other groups) could be misleading. For this reason, the RRI for multi-racial youth is not shown on the chart below. All other groups had at least 20 referrals screened at Juvenile Hall from 2014-2022. With guarded confidence related to smaller groups and making no conclusion about multi-racial youth, the results suggest that detention rates for youth of color are like those for white youth. Refer to the Appendix for counts, rates and RRIs for all groups.

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Chart 1. Detention Rate Comparisons: Comparing rates of detention across racial/ethnic groups on new delinquency referrals screened at Juvenile Hall, 2014-2022



Combining across all years in the analysis period as in Chart 1 helps us begin to understand the experience of racial/ethnic groups with the Juvenile Justice System. Examining RRIs for detention rates by year is of interest in understanding changes over time, but this creates even smaller groups – many so small that the RRIs are possibly misleading. To reduce mistaken conclusions, Chart 2 below shows RRIs by year only where the number of yearly referrals screened for a group is 20 or more. Hispanic and white group counts are over 20 in all years reported. Black group counts are over 20 except for 2017 and 2020-2022. No other racial ethnic groups had counts over 20 in any year. While breaking out by year shows more variance in the RRIs, they are mostly close to even. For reference, Table 1 shows counts of referrals screened at Juvenile Hall by race/ethnicity for each year 2014-2022. Refer to the Appendix for counts, rates and RRIs for all groups.

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Chart 2. Detention Rate Comparisons by Year: Comparing rates of detention across racial/ethnic groups on new delinquency referrals screened at Juvenile Hall by year, 2014-2022

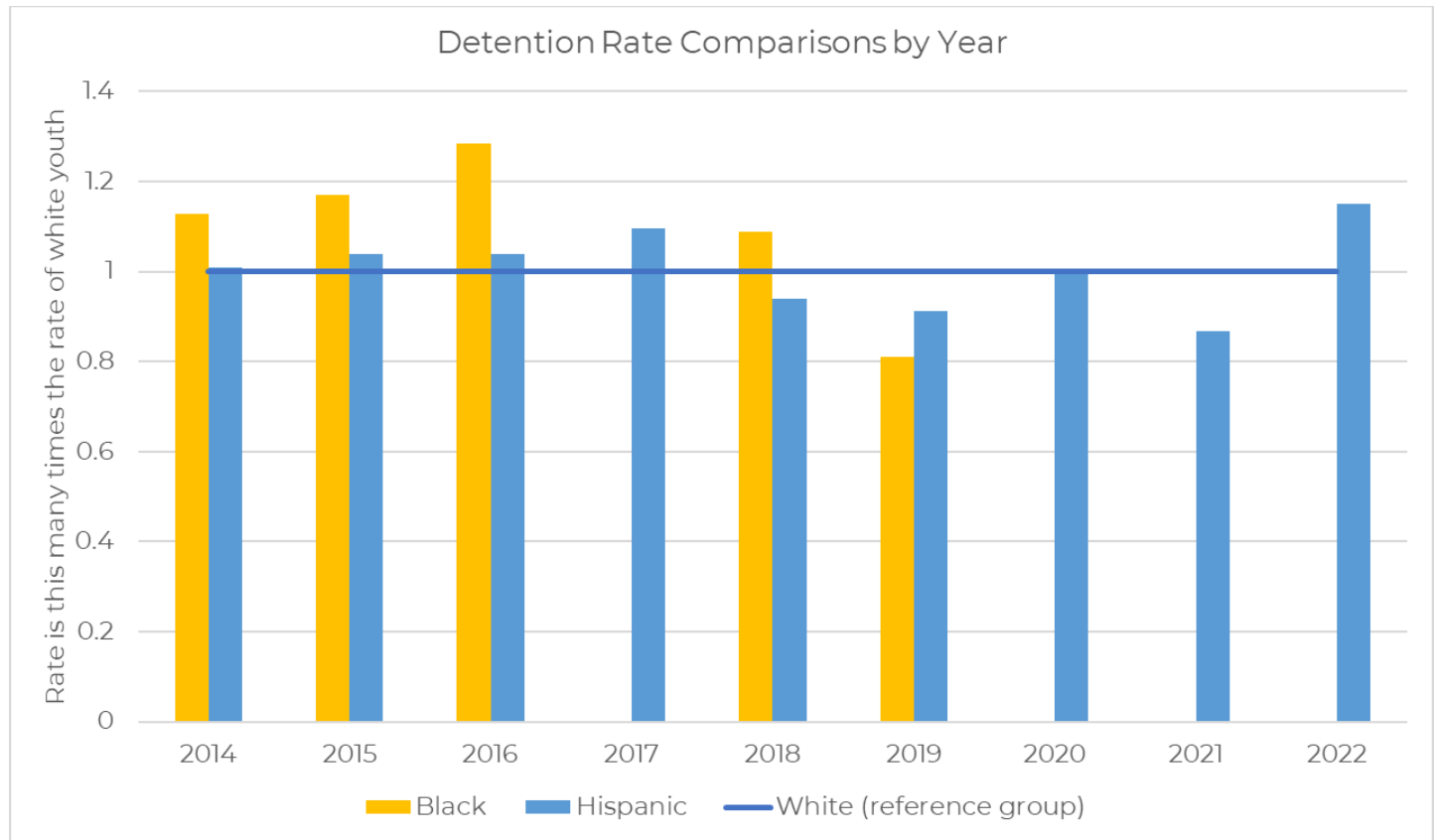


Table 1. Counts of new referrals screened at Juvenile Hall by race/ethnicity, 2014-2022

Year	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Other/Unknown	White	Total
2014	14	9	40	233		8	6	162	472
2015	12	4	20	175	2	6	3	139	361
2016	11	5	39	151	2	4	13	116	341
2017	4	7	15	141		3	12	124	306
2018	4	3	35	169		3	12	104	330
2019	7	3	25	120		3	11	100	269
2020	1		14	76	1	1	4	45	142
2021	1	1	8	48			5	52	115
2022	2	3	17	103	4	3	2	49	183
Total	56	35	213	1216	9	31	68	891	2519

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When a case screened at Juvenile Hall results in detention, the decision is in one of three categories: detain per the assessment score, mandatory detention per policy, or override of the assessment score in line with policy. Decisions at Detention Intake use the Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI). The DRAI calculates a score for risk to reoffend or fail to appear for court if released. By policy detention is mandatory in some situations, regardless of the score. Examples: youth is brought in on a warrant, the charges are very serious, or the youth is brought in on a violation of probation in accordance with Probation's graduated response policy. In some cases where mandatory detention does not apply and the score does not indicate detention, an override to detain may be approved such as when there is a threat to public safety, or high likelihood that the youth will flee.

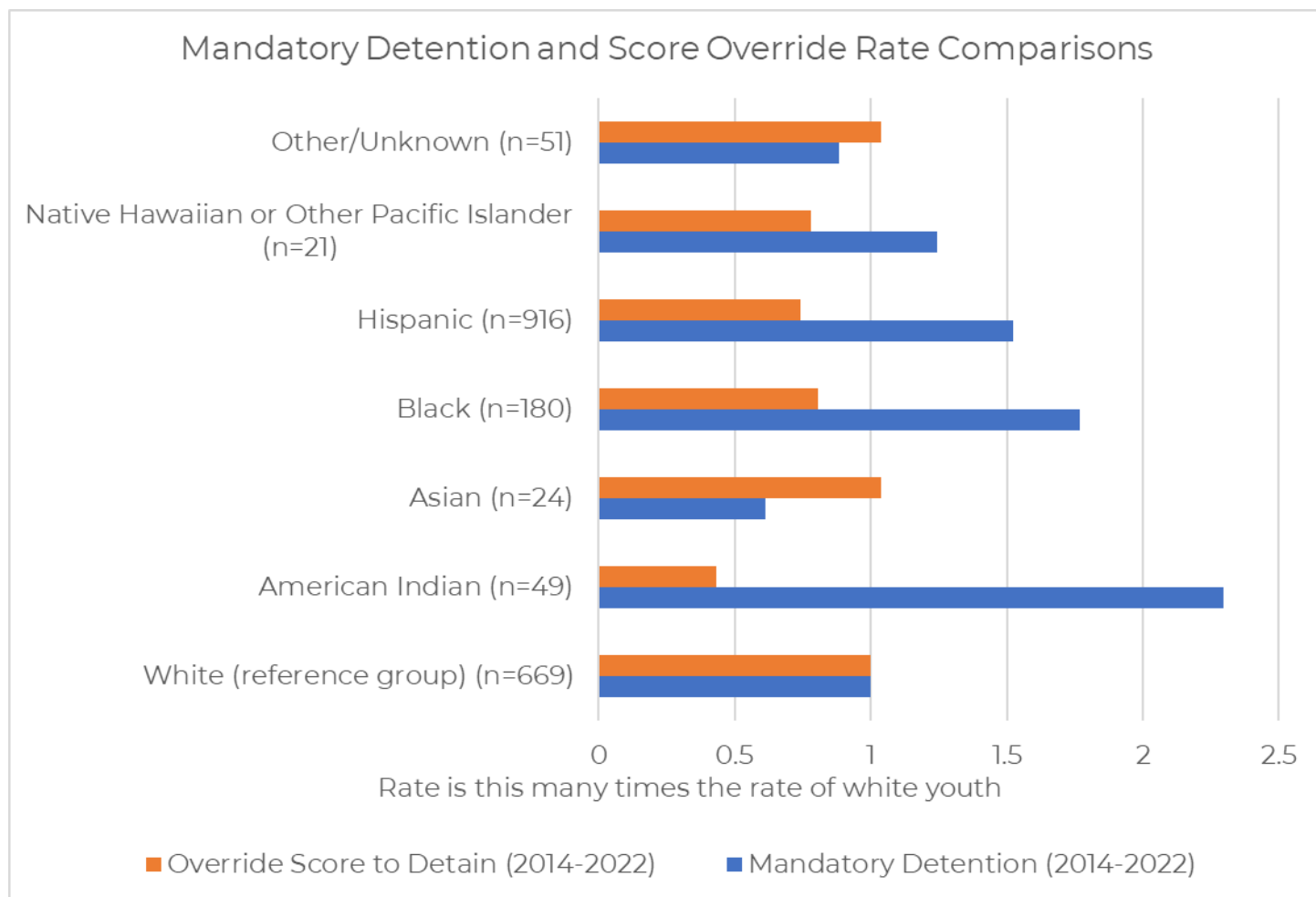
Detain per score occurred in only 73 of 1,917 (4%) of screened cases resulting in detention. Assessment score configuration is the subject of ongoing detention risk assessment improvement efforts. Because detention per score occurs infrequently, RRI calculations on this category would be potentially misleading about what we might expect next time we check, and therefore are not included in this analysis. Of the 1,917 cases screened at Juvenile Hall resulting in detention, mandatory detention per policy occurred in 789 (41%) of these, and override of the assessment score to detain occurred in 1,055 (55%). Chart 3 below compares RRIs for mandatory detention and detention on score overrides.

Compared with referrals resulting in detention for white youth, mandatory detention happened proportionally more for referrals on Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Black and American Indian youth, and slightly less for other/unknown and Asian youth. And compared with referrals resulting in detention for white youth, overrides of the assessment score occurred proportionally less for referrals on Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Black and American Indian youth, and slightly more for other/unknown and Asian youth.

While some group sizes are smaller and provide less confidence that we'd see a similar result next time we take a similar measurement, some are larger and suggest there are real differences for some groups in mandatory detention and score override results (as opposed to chance). Further exploration could examine specific reasons cited for mandatory detention and score overrides.

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Chart 3. Mandatory Detention and Score Override Rate Comparisons: Comparing rates of mandatory detention and score overrides across racial/ethnic groups among new delinquency referrals resulting in detention in Juvenile Hall, 2014-2022



Examining RRI for mandatory detention and score override rates by year is of interest in understanding changes over time, but as above this creates some groups that are so small that the RRI are possibly misleading. To reduce mistaken conclusions, Charts 4 and 5 below show RRI by year only where the number of yearly referrals screened for a group is 20 or more. Hispanic and white group counts are over 20 in all years reported. Black group counts are over 20 only in 2014, 2016 and 2018. No other racial ethnic groups had counts over 20 in any year.

As shown in Chart 4 below, in the years 2014-2017 referrals for Hispanic youth received mandatory detention at higher rates than white youth. Where counts of referrals for Black youth resulting in detention were over 20, they also received higher rates of mandatory detention in these years. Since 2017 mandatory detention for referrals on Hispanic youth occurs at about the same rate as for referrals on white youth. Table 2 shows counts of referrals screened at Juvenile Hall resulting in detention by race/ethnicity for each year 2014-2022. Refer to the Appendix for counts, rates and RRI for all groups.

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Chart 4. Mandatory Detention Rate Comparisons By Year: Comparing rates of mandatory detention across racial/ethnic groups among new delinquency referrals resulting in detention in Juvenile Hall by year, 2014-2022

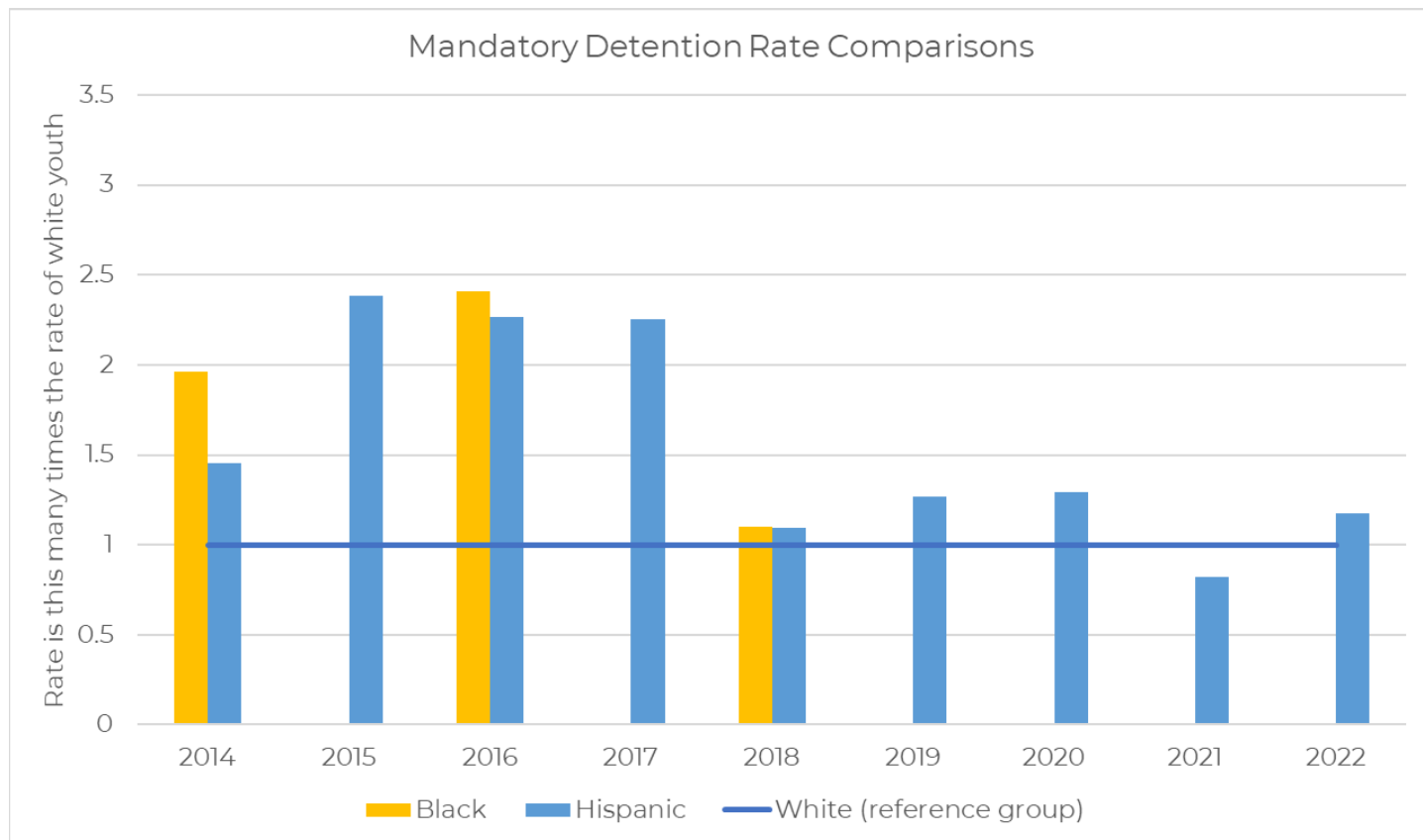


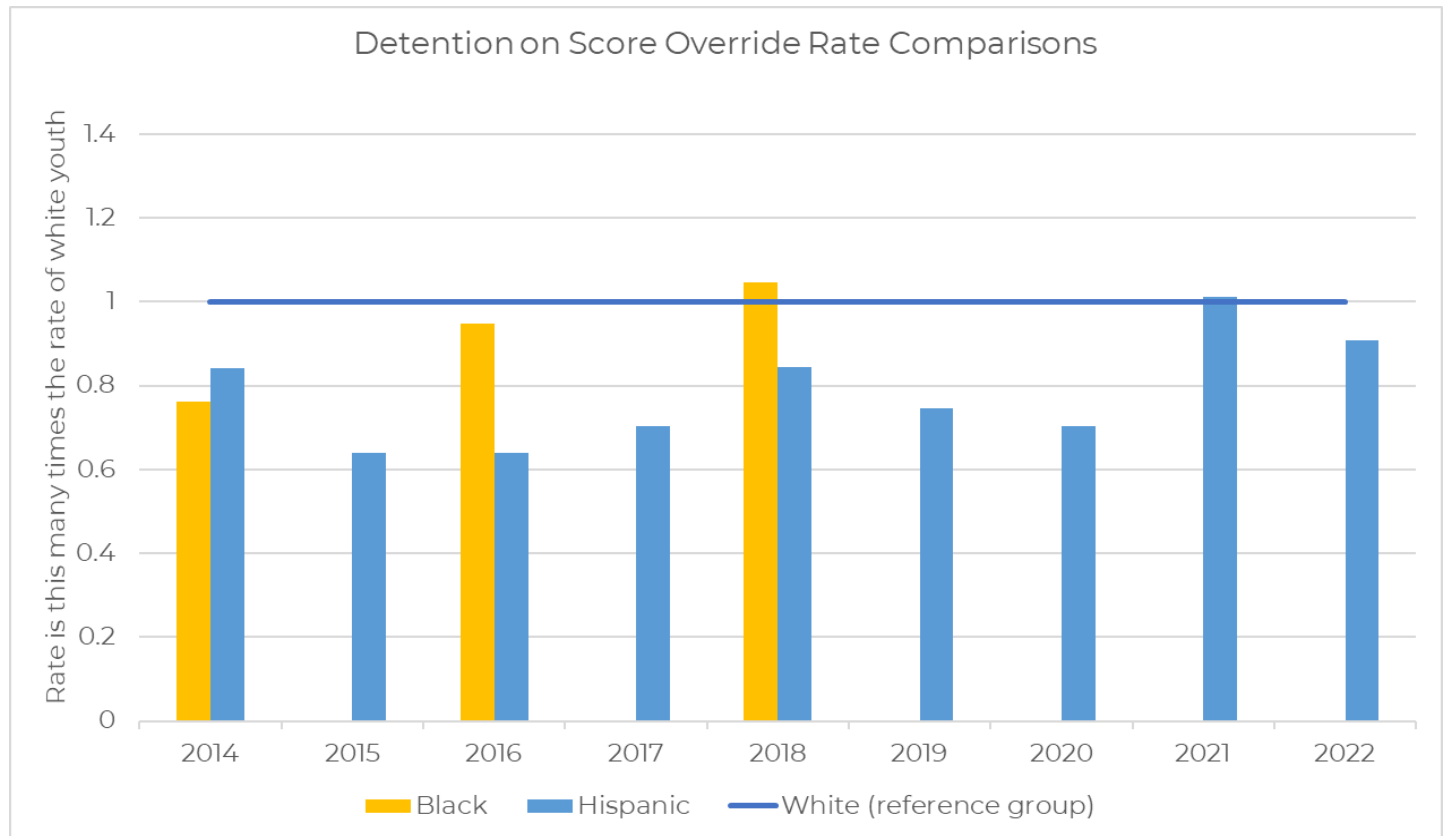
Table 2. Counts of new referrals screened at Juvenile Hall resulting in detention, 2014-2022

Year	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Other/Unknown	White	Total
2014	13	5	34	177		3	6	122	360
2015	9	2	17	132	1	3	2	101	267
2016	10	4	38	119	2	4	10	88	275
2017	3	5	13	117		3	9	94	244
2018	4	3	30	125		3	6	82	253
2019	7	2	15	81		2	9	74	190
2020	1		12	54		1	4	32	104
2021	1		7	36			3	45	92
2022	1	3	14	75	4	2	2	31	132
Total	49	24	180	916	7	21	51	669	1917

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Chart 5 below compares rates of overrides to the detention risk assessment score where a youth with a score indicating release was detained instead based on override criteria outlined in policy. The rate is out of all screened cases that resulted in detention. Where group sizes were over 20 in a year, the override rate for referrals for white youth is usually higher than that for Hispanic and Black youth, and never much lower.

Chart 5. Assessment Score Override Rate Comparisons By Year: Comparing rates of score overrides across racial/ethnic groups among new delinquency referrals resulting in detention in Juvenile Hall by year, 2014-2022



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Race/Ethnicity Key: W = White, AI = American Indian, A = Asian, B = Black, H = Hispanic, M = Multi-Racial, NHPI = Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, O = Other/Unknown

	W #	W Rate	W RRI	AI #	AI Rate	AI RRI	A #	A Rate	A RRI	B #	B Rate	B RRI	H #	H Rate	H RRI	M #	M Rate	M RRI	NHPI #	NHPI Rate	NHPI RRI	O #	O Rate	O RRI
Detention Decisions																								
Referrals Screened (2014)	162			14			9			40			233						8			6		
Release (2014)	40	0.25	1	1	0.07	0.29	4	0.44	1.80	6	0.15	0.61	56	0.24	0.97				5	0.63	2.53			
Detain (2014)	122	0.75	1	13	0.93	1.23	5	0.56	0.74	34	0.85	1.13	177	0.76	1.01				3	0.38	0.50	6	1.00	1.33
Detain Per Score (2014)	4	0.02	1	1	0.07	2.89				2	0.05	2.03	5	0.02	0.87									
Mandatory Detention (2014)	33	0.20	1	9	0.64	3.16	1	0.11	0.55	16	0.40	1.96	69	0.30	1.45				2	0.25	1.23	1	0.17	0.82
Override Score to Detain (2014)	85	0.52	1	3	0.21	0.41	4	0.44	0.85	16	0.40	0.76	103	0.44	0.84				1	0.13	0.24	5	0.83	1.59
Referrals Screened (2015)	139			12			4			20			175			2			6			3		
Release (2015)	38	0.27	1	3	0.25	0.91	2	0.50	1.83	3	0.15	0.55	43	0.25	0.90	1	0.50	1.83	3	0.50	1.83	1	0.33	1.22
Detain (2015)	101	0.73	1	9	0.75	1.03	2	0.50	0.69	17	0.85	1.17	132	0.75	1.04	1	0.50	0.69	3	0.50	0.69	2	0.67	0.92
Detain Per Score (2015)	2	0.01	1	6	0.50	34.75				1	0.05	3.48	4	0.02	1.59									
Mandatory Detention (2015)	22	0.16	1	2	0.17	1.05				8	0.40	2.53	66	0.38	2.38				2	0.33	2.11			
Override Score to Detain (2015)	77	0.55	1	1	0.08	0.15	2	0.50	0.90	8	0.40	0.72	62	0.35	0.64	1	0.50	0.90	1	0.17	0.30	2	0.67	1.20
Referrals Screened (2016)	116			11			5			39			151			2			4			13		
Release (2016)	28	0.24	1	1	0.09	0.38	1	0.20	0.83	1	0.03	0.11	32	0.21	0.88							3	0.23	0.96
Detain (2016)	88	0.76	1	10	0.91	1.20	4	0.80	1.05	38	0.97	1.28	119	0.79	1.04	2	1.00	1.32	4	1.00	1.32	10	0.77	1.01
Detain Per Score (2016)	1	0.01	1				1	0.20	23.20		0.00	0.00	2	0.01	1.54							1	0.08	8.92
Mandatory Detention (2016)	21	0.18	1	7	0.64	3.52				17	0.44	2.41	62	0.41	2.27				1	0.25	1.38	2	0.15	0.85
Override Score to Detain (2016)	66	0.57	1	3	0.27	0.48	3	0.60	1.05	21	0.54	0.95	55	0.36	0.64	2	1.00	1.76	3	0.75	1.32	7	0.54	0.95
Referrals Screened (2017)	124			4			7			15			141						3			12		
Release (2017)	30	0.24	1	1	0.25	1.03	2	0.29	1.18	2	0.13	0.55	24	0.17	0.70							3	0.25	1.03
Detain (2017)	94	0.76	1	3	0.75	0.99	5	0.71	0.94	13	0.87	1.14	117	0.83	1.09				3	1.00	1.32	9	0.75	0.99
Detain Per Score (2017)	1	0.01	1								0.00	0.00	2	0.01	1.76									
Mandatory Detention (2017)	23	0.19	1	1	0.25	1.35				5	0.33	1.80	59	0.42	2.26							3	0.25	1.35
Override Score to Detain (2017)	70	0.56	1	2	0.50	0.89	5	0.71	1.27	8	0.53	0.94	56	0.40	0.70				3	1.00	1.77	6	0.50	0.89

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Detention Decisions	W #	W Rate	W RRI	AI #	AI Rate	AI RRI	A #	A Rate	A RRI	B #	B Rate	B RRI	H #	H Rate	H RRI	M #	M Rate	M RRI	NHPI #	NHPI Rate	NHPI RRI	O #	O Rate	O RRI
Referrals Screened (2018)	104			4			3			35			169						3			12		
Release (2018)	22	0.21	1					0.00	0.00	5	0.14	0.68	44	0.26	1.23							6	0.50	2.36
Detain (2018)	82	0.79	1	4	1.00	1.27	3	1.00	1.27	30	0.86	1.09	125	0.74	0.94				3	1.00	1.27	6	0.50	0.63
Detain Per Score (2018)	1	0.01	1							1	0.03	2.97	3	0.02	1.85									
Mandatory Detention (2018)	27	0.26	1	3	0.75	2.89				10	0.29	1.10	48	0.28	1.09					0.00	0.00	1	0.08	0.32
Override Score to Detain (2018)	54	0.52	1	1	0.25	0.48	3	1.00	1.93	19	0.54	1.05	74	0.44	0.84				3	1.00	1.93	5	0.42	0.80
Referrals Screened (2019)	100			7			3			25			120						3			11		
Release (2019)	26	0.26	1				1	0.33	1.28	10	0.40	1.54	39	0.33	1.25				1	0.33	1.28	2	0.18	0.70
Detain (2019)	74	0.74	1	7	1.00	1.35	2	0.67	0.90	15	0.60	0.81	81	0.68	0.91				2	0.67	0.90	9	0.82	1.11
Detain Per Score (2019)	3	0.03	1										3	0.03	0.83							1	0.09	3.03
Mandatory Detention (2019)	23	0.23	1	5	0.71	3.11	1	0.33	1.45	10	0.40	1.74	35	0.29	1.27				2	0.67	2.90	4	0.36	1.58
Override Score to Detain (2019)	48	0.48	1	2	0.29	0.60	1	0.33	0.69	5	0.20	0.42	43	0.36	0.75							4	0.36	0.76
Referrals Screened (2020)	45			1						14			76			1			1			4		
Release (2020)	13	0.29	1							2	0.14	0.49	22	0.29	1.00	1	1.00	3.46						
Detain (2020)	32	0.71	1	1	1.00	1.41				12	0.86	1.21	54	0.71	1.00				1	1.00	1.41	4	1.00	1.41
Detain Per Score (2020)	5	0.11	1							1	0.07	0.64	11	0.14	1.30									
Mandatory Detention (2020)	11	0.24	1	1	1.00	4.09				10	0.71	2.92	24	0.32	1.29				1	1.00	4.09	1	0.25	1.02
Override Score to Detain (2020)	16	0.36	1							1	0.07	0.20	19	0.25	0.70							3	0.75	2.11
Referrals Screened (2021)	52			1			1			8			48									5		
Release (2021)	7	0.13	1				1	1.00	7.43	1	0.13	0.93	12	0.25	1.86							2	0.40	2.97
Detain (2021)	45	0.87	1	1	1.00	1.16				7	0.88	1.01	36	0.75	0.87							3	0.60	0.69
Detain Per Score (2021)	1	0.02	1							1	0.13	6.50		0.00	0.00									
Mandatory Detention (2021)	29	0.56	1	1	1.00	1.79				4	0.50	0.90	22	0.46	0.82							2	0.40	0.72
Override Score to Detain (2021)	15	0.29	1		0.00	0.00				2	0.25	0.87	14	0.29	1.01							1	0.20	0.69
Referrals Screened (2022)	49			2			3			17			103			4			3			2		
Release (2022)	18	0.37	1	1	0.50	1.36				3	0.18	0.48	28	0.27	0.74				1	0.33	0.91		0.00	0.00
Detain (2022)	31	0.63	1	1	0.50	0.79	3	1.00	1.58	14	0.82	1.30	75	0.73	1.15	4	1.00	1.58	2	0.67	1.05	2	1.00	1.58
Detain Per Score (2022)	1	0.02	1							1	0.06	2.88	7	0.07	3.33									

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Mandatory Detention (2022)	19	0.39	1	1	0.50	1.29	3	1.00	2.58	8	0.47	1.21	47	0.46	1.18	3	0.75	1.93	1	0.33	0.86			
Override Score to Detain (2022)	11	0.22	1							5	0.29	1.31	21	0.20	0.91	1	0.25	1.11	1	0.33	1.48	2	1.00	4.45
Referrals Screened (2014-22)	891			56			35			213			1216			9			31			68		
Release (2014-22)	222	0.25	1	7	0.13	0.50	11	0.31	1.26	33	0.15	0.62	300	0.25	0.99	2	0.22	0.89	10	0.32	1.29	17	0.25	1.00
Detain (2014-22)	669	0.75	1	49	0.88	1.17	24	0.69	0.91	180	0.85	1.13	916	0.75	1.00	7	0.78	1.04	21	0.68	0.90	51	0.75	1.00
Detain Per Score (2014-22)	19	0.02	1	7	0.13	5.86	1	0.03	1.34	7	0.03	1.54	37	0.03	1.43							2	0.03	1.38
Mandatory Detention (2014-22)	208	0.23	1	30	0.54	2.29	5	0.14	0.61	88	0.41	1.77	432	0.36	1.52	3	0.33	1.43	9	0.29	1.24	14	0.21	0.88
Override Sc to Detain (2014-20)	442	0.50	1	12	0.21	0.43	18	0.51	1.04	85	0.40	0.80	447	0.37	0.74	4	0.44	0.90	12	0.39	0.78	35	0.51	1.04